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The Review of Religions

Editor—A. Q. Niaz, B.A.

. XLII, No. 1

nuary, 1943

QADIAN
anjab : India

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Review of Religions

Vol. XLII · January 1943 · No. 1

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

ZIKR-I-HABEEB

The Holy Prophet Muhammad

It is related from Anas ibn Malik that men from three tribes came to the house of the Holy Prophet and asked about the *ibādāt* (devotional practices, meditations and prayers) of the Holy Prophet. When they were informed on this point they exclaimed: "When this is the position of the Holy Prophet even though there is the divine promise that God will forgive whatever shortcomings might remain in his spiritual endeavour, what should be our plight with our sins and transgressions!" So one of them said: "I shall in future stand up in perayer all through the night every day." The other said: "I shall observe a fast every day of the week"; and the third said: "I take a vow of celibacy; I shall never marry, so that I may be able to worship God without any distracting cares." When the Holy Prophet heard this he said: "Have you people said so and so?" "Yes, we have, O Prophet of God," they replied; and the Holy Prophet said: "I am the one who fears God most

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the lesson that it is only a righteous, honest, sagacious and God-fearing child that is worth having. At every stage, *viz.*, selection of wife, conjugal meeting, birth of child, he directs us to bow before Him so that He might bestow upon us a suitable mate, save our progeny from evil and help us to bring up and educate children in the right manner. Our first and foremost duty towards our progeny demands that we should keep our own thoughts pure and remain constantly engaged in prayers for them.

The recital of azān (call to prayer) in the ear of the newly born infant is a wonderful way of pointing to the parents, " Beware ! Your duty to educate the child has started." The same lesson has been taught in another way. Allah declares in the Holy Quran :

نسـاؤكم حرث لكم

i.e. " Your wives are tilth for you."[1] When the farmer sees that the sprouts have appeared in his field he does not consider his task to have come to an end ; rather that is the opportunity when he should bestow his full care in order to overcome the defects of the seed, if any, and to secure the steady growth of the plant.

Trial for the parents

Allah says :

انما اموالكم و اولاد كم فتنة و عندالله اجرا عظيم

i.e., " Your wealth and your offspring are a trial for you, and if you succeed in it Allah has a mighty reward for you."[2] It is not only for the sake of the future of our race, community and country, but even to save our own good name that we should not ignore the noble duty in regard to the proper upbringing of children. If one rightly discharges this duty he really deserves a great recompense. Ayyub bin Musa reports from his father, and he from his grandfather, that the Holy Prophet (may blessings and peace of God be upon him) said, " No father has ever given a better gift to his child than good breeding."[3]

1. *The Quran*, ch. II : v. 223.
2. *The Quran*, ch. LXIV : v. 15.
3. *Tirmidhi*.

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Parents! deny not this gift to them for they need it more than anything else.

No neglect of Daughters

Male children have no preference over female children in the matter of upbringing, education and instruction; rather more heed is advised to be paid to the daughters. Anas (may God be pleased with him) reports from the Holy Prophet (may God bless him), "Whoever looked to the needs of his two daughters until they came of age, he and I would be raised together on the Day of Resurrection like these two fingers," and while saying so he joined two fingers of his.[4]

What a great reward! No real Muslim can but feel a yearning for it.

Father's Duty

If a Muslim, ignoring all the emphasis given to the education and upbringing of the child, neglects it, he commits one of the greatest sins by disobeying his Creator. Allah says:

يا ايهاالذين آمنوا قوا انفسكم واهليكم نارا

i.e., "O you who believe, save yourself and your family from fire."

The father's duty is not only this that he should strive to save himself from the chastisement of hell, but he is likewise duty bound to guard his wife and children.

Lap of the Mother

The lap of the mother is the first school which the infant joins. Lessons taught here are seldom forgotten. The child comes to its mother from heaven with a clean slate. She may write on it whatever she prefers. So a mother should be on guard and it is a duty of the father who is usually more learned, better informed, and whom the Shariat has given the position

4. *Muslim.*

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of a guardian (*qawwām*) in the family, to impress upon the mind of his wife the importance of the proper upbringing of the child.

Principle of Education

Allah says in the Holy Book :

يايهاالذين آمنوا ان من ازواجكم واولادكم عدوا لكم فاحذروهم وان تعفوا وتصفحوا وتغفروا فان الله غفور الرحيم ۔

"O, you believers! Some of your wives and your children are enemies to you, therefore, beware of them; and if you pardon and act as a cover for their mistakes and shortcomings, then surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."[5]

Those wives that do not take proper care of their children and those children that soil the good name of their ancestors, are no doubt enemies. Allah directs us that in order to reform such spoiled children we should not straightaway resort to torture, but we should take every care to remove them from the undesirable environment which may be badly affecting their character. We should also combat whatever other evil influences are at work upon the minds of the children in the form of friends, neighbourhood, occupation, etc. Then if they still indulge in undesirable acts we are advised عفو, *i.e.*, pardon, if they feel repentance and if it would help to improve them. By the command تصفحوا He teaches us forbearance. We should not be very critical of them and pick out each and every fault; rather we should cultivate the habit of overlooking. Then He says تغفروا, *i.e.*, we should serve as a cover for the shortcomings and weaknesses of our children. If they commit some mistake we should not mention it to them again and again and thus make them obstinate; nor should we relate these to others and make them notorious ourselves. At the end of the verse by mentioning His attributes God enjoins us to bow before Him for whatever defects remain in upbringing and education. Prayer for the progeny should

5. Chapter LXIV : v. 14.

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never be missed. Allah is Forgiving and Merciful; He would overlook our defects and faults and those of our progeny and turn mercifully to us. No university, no philosopher and no educationist can teach us so nicely as Allah has taught us the method of educating the children. In dealing with them the aspect of love should be more prominent than that of fear. It is absolutely wrong to say : "Spare the rod and spoil the boy."

The Holy Prophet (may the blessings and peace of God be upon him) was the best tutor that the world has ever seen, for by his education within a few years he wrought wonders. He created such a transformation in his pupils and built such strong characters that they were able to shake the whole world and secure, in no time, the position of the teachers of the world. Lessons taught by the worthy pupils of that greatest teacher are still fresh in the minds of the believers and no non-Muslim can dare deny their wonderful effect. The example set by that great tutor is that he possessed and made occasional expressions of profound love and affection for the children and could not tolerate any cruelty to them. He would kiss them, seat them on his knee, take them to the mosque and would bear them in his lap even during prayers, allow them to take meals with him and enjoy jokes with them. He would never rebuke or threaten children, nor allow punishment except as a last resort, only to the extent necessary to reform them. Abu Hureirah (God be pleased with him) reports that the Holy Prophet (may God bless him) kissed Hasan, son of Ali (God be pleased with them), while Agra'a bin Habis was sitting by his side. Agra'a said, "I have ten children but have never kissed any of them." At this the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) looked at him and spoke, "Whoever does not have mercy for others, God wont be merciful to him."[6] It is a great cruelty to deny the child parental affection and it makes the parents undeserving of God's mercy.

Usāma bin Zaid (God be pleased with him) relates

6. *Bukhāree.*

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about himself that when he was a child the Holy Prophet (may God bless him) would get hold of him, seat him on one knee and Hasan on the other, then draw them together and pray, "O Allah! be kind to them for I love them."[7] These two traditions would suffice to give a glimpse of the Prophet's treatment of the children.

The Promised Messiah (peace be on him) also emphasized the same view. Hazrat M. Abdul Karim (God be pleased with him) writes about him in his *Sirat*:

"The Hazrat is strongly opposed to punishing children. I have often seen that he is never so angry as on hearing that someone has beaten a child. Here a gentleman once beat his son out of habit. The Hazrat was much affected by it. He sent for him and delivered a very touching speech. The Promised Messiah said, "Chastising children in this manner is according to me polytheism. It is as if the ill-natured chastiser wanted to make himself an associate with God in guidance and upbringing..... Real guidance and upbringing is the work of God. To pursue incessantly and take a matter beyond limits by insistence, *i.e.*, to check and criticise every action of the children denotes that we affect to be masters of their guidance and able to bring them to a path according to our sweet will. It is a form of latent polytheism."[8]

From the above it may not be misunderstood that a Muslim father or tutor is not at all authorised by the *Shariat* to punish his children. As I pointed out while explaining the verse of the Holy Quran above, children are to be pardoned if their welfare so demands. It necessarily implies that otherwise they can be punished to the extent which is necessary. The Promised Messiah (peace be on him) has also made it clear by the following words in the very speech, part of which is quoted above:

"If someone is self-respecting, doesn't lose tem-

7. *Bukhāree.*
8. *Sirat*, pp. 31, 32.

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per and is very forbearing, forgiving, calm and respectful, he may punish or reprimand the child at some proper time, to a certain extent, but one who is irritable, loose-tempered and lacks common-sense, he doesn't deserve to be entrusted with the education of the children."

Love should be the rule, sanction of fear should very seldom be brought to the forefront. Punishment shall not be given immediately when the child has committed some offence and a passion of anger has overtaken you, but at a later stage when anger has cooled down and by calm consideration you still deem punishment necessary for the child. Modern educationists are also becoming of the same view *i.e.*, corporal punishment is not the proper method of correcting the children. It is said that experience has shown that 75 per cent. of seven years old children tell lies. They do so simply for the reason that they feel themselves insecure and helpless. As the pressure of elders increases their habit of lying gets momentum.

Community's Responsibility

Though the primary and foremost duty to bring up and educate the children devolves upon the parents, yet, they being our national asset, the whole community should feel joint responsibility for the same. They are the to-morrow of our society : if we arrange for their upbringing we save our society from deterioration. They are 'the fragile beginnings of a mighty end': how can we possibly ignore them if we desire to achieve our ideal? Our Amir-ul-Momineen has accordingly made an arrangement for them. He has set up an organisation, known as *Majlis-i-Khuddām-ul-Ahmadiyya*, comprising youths who are from 15 to 40 years old, and entrusted to them the education of children who are from 7 to 15 years of age. These children possess a sub-organisation known as *Majlis-i-Atfāl* which functions as a branch of the *Khuddām-ul-Ahmadiyya*. The *Majlis* appoints *Murabbis* (*i.e.*, tutors) who are to attend to their upbringing, education and

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training according to its programme with the co-operation of the parents. Full particulars about it can be obtained from the central office of the *Majlis* at Qadian.

Cultivation of Good Morals

It is the sacred duty of every father, teacher and tutor to create good morals in the child. The Holy Prophet (may God bless him) is reported to have said :

"The best of you is he who possesses the best moral character."[9]

On another occasion he said,

"Of all things that God has given people, good morals are the best."[10]

The Promised Messiah (may God bless him) said :

"Reformation of every community starts from good morals."[11]

Every religion that has ever been preached on the surface of this globe has attached the foremost importance to morals, though guidance supplied by pre-Islamic prophets in this respect appears to be very meagre and poor as compared with that given to us by Islam. And morality is mostly dependent on habits which have their roots in childhood. If we want to create a spiritual revolution, if we desire to save coming generation from going astray, if we aspire to be teachers of the world, we cannot but pay full heed to the moral betterment of our progeny.

Hazrat Amir-ul-Momineen in his *Khutba* of April 15, 1938 while directing the *Khuddām-ul-Ahmadiyya* to establish a branch of children said :

"Though cultivation of all good morals in them (*i.e.*, children) is necessary, but three habits especially should be formed, *viz.*, the habit of punctuality in prayers, habit of speaking the truth and the habit of industry."[12]

9. *Bukhāree*, Kitab-ul-Adab.
10. Ibn-i-Hambal.
11. *The Badr* dated September 8, 1904 A.D.
12. *Alfazl*, April 22, 1938.

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A brief statement of these virtues along with suggestions for their cultivation among children is given below.

Punctuality in Prayers

Allah says in the Holy Quran :—

وأمر اهلك بالصلوٰة واصطبر عليها ۔

i.e., "And enjoin prayer on your family and adhere to it."[13]

The Holy Prophet (may God bless him) is as well reported to have said :

"Enjoin prayer on your children when they are seven years of age, and when they are grown up to the tenth year chastise them if they neglect prayers and separate their beds from each other.[14]

So children of seven years or more should be advised to attend the five daily prayers in the mosque. Till the tenth year all effort should be made to make them punctual, but if they still continue to be unmindful of it, they may be coerced to do so by punishment.

Hazrat Ameer-ul-Momineen says :

"Islam is nothing without prayer. If a community desires to keep alive the Islamic spirit in her future generations, it is her duty to create in every child the habit of punctuality in prayers.[15]

It is the first and foremost duty of every *Murabbi* and parents should sincerely and earnestly co-operate to create in boys from childhood a deep attachment to mosques and an eagerness to attend all the five congregations daily. This habit of punctuality in prayers would greatly help to grow the child to be a virtuous man. Firstly because it has inherent capacity to save one from wicked deeds as Allah says :

"Surely prayer keeps one away from indecency and evil."[16]

13. Ch. XX : v. 132.
14. *Abu Daūd.*
15. *Alfazl*, dated April 22, 1938.
16. *The Quran*, ch. XXIX : v. 15.

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Secondly because the child going to mosque regularly, it would facilitate the task of education for the mosque is a Muslim University in the real sense of the word.

Truthfulness

Of all the moral qualities Islam has laid the greatest emphasis on truthfulness. Truthfulness is God's own attribute and a distinguishing quality of prophets and their righteous followers. Telling a lie is a vice considered by Islam akin to idol-worship.[17] The Holy Prophet deemed it to be the root-cause of numerous evil habits.

Once a person came to the Holy Prophet and said, "I am an adulterer, a thief, a drunkard and a liar but I'm prepared to give up one of these vices, to begin with; tell me which one? The Holy Prophet (may God bless him) replied, "Never tell a lie." The tradition goes to say that he became free of all vices by this because when evil passion overtook him he thought either he shall have to speak the truth and incur punishment or break the promise he gave to the Holy Apostle of God (may God bless him.)

The Promised Messiah (peace be on him) assigned it first place after the promise not to indulge in polytheism in his Conditions of Bait (published January 12, 1889 A.D.)

The Ameer-ul-Momineen says:

"Morals cannot be improved without truthfulness; a community which is devoid of truthfulness is devoid of good morals."[18]

No doubt lying drags a person to sinful life, and truthfulness elevates him to a prominent position of piety and righteousness. Western civilization has legalized lying. Modern "law", politics, social etiquette —all owe a heavy debt to falsehood. An honest police officer, an honest defence lawyer, and no successful politician can deny the part which falsehood

17. *The Quran* ch. XXII: v. 30.
18. *Alfazl*, April 22, 1938 A.D.

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plays in life as organised at present. And lastly, if you are unaware of the art of lying, you don't know even the ABC of social etiquette; you would be declared unmannerly and shall have to give up the attempt to become social. In fact the definition of truthfulness has undergone a change in the twentieth century. Now it is so defined as to include all sorts of fashionable and cunning lies.

Under these circumstances our task to create in the child the virtue of real Islamic truthfulness no doubt appears to be a very arduous one. But if we start our work just from infancy we would find it much easier. Tell the mother not to frighten the child by falsely naming real and imaginary beings. Be careful to give only the promise which you can and mean to fulfil. Abdullah bin Amir (God be pleased with him) reports that once when the Holy Prophet (may blessings and peace of God be upon him) was present in his house, his mother, in order to call him said, "Come here, I would give you something." The Holy Prophet remarked, "you say so, but do you mean to give him anything?" The mother said, "I would give him a date." The Holy Prophet (peace be on him) said, "Well, had you not given him something this lie of yours would have been written."[19]

Some people, when something is offered to them, are in the habit of saying pretentiously: "Not hungry, don't need it," though the reality might be the reverse. They might be feeling strong appetite or dire need for the same. The Holy Prophet declared the offering of such excuses to be a lie in answer to an enquiry from Asma.[20] Beware! never allow the child to put forward such excuses.

Some lies are apparently harmless, consequently people generally don't mind them, *e.g.*, gossip to provoke laughter. But the Holy Prophet (may God bless him) says, "Woe to him, again woe to him who tells lies to provoke laughter."[21] Children are

19. *Abu Daud*, Kitab-ul-Adab.
20. *Musnad-i-Ahmad*.
21. *Abu Daud*.

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among you. But sometimes I observe fasting and at other times I do not; part of my time I spend in prayer and for part of it I take rest; and I take women in marriage. This is my Way: whoever turns away from it, he has no connection with me."

Bokhāree.

Hazrat Ahmad

[Translation of a statement in Urdu by Syed Zainul Abedeen Wali Ullah Shah, received by us through *Nazarat Taleef-o-Tasneef* – Ed.]

I well remember that I was about seven or eight years old when I first heard it mentioned in our home that someone had put forward the claim that he was the long expected Mehdee, and that he had seen in a vision a number of angels planting trees black in colour which he interpreted to signify the outbreak of plague as a sign of his advent. At that time we were in Tahsil Rayyah, District Sialkot. My father was the doctor in charge of the Civil Hospital in that place. I also remember that about this time I dreamt that some one brought to us in our home the news that the Holy Prophet was coming and we ran out to receive him. As I came out, over the eastern compound wall of the Hospital I saw a venerable old gentleman riding in a *bahlee*. As far as I can remember, he was wearing a green turban. His face was noble and full, his complexion was wheat coloured, and he had a white beard, and there was the sun in the sky. This gentleman spoke to me and said, "I have come to teach you the Holy Quran."

Later on when I came to Qadian I recognised in Hazrat *Nana Jan* the old gentleman I had seen in my dream.

During these days I also saw in a dream the mosque in Rayyah. On its door was written:

لا الٰہ الا اللہ محمد الرسول اللہ

but the words appeared to have become faint and indistinct. The *Imām* of the Age arrived there and entered the mosque and I followed him. Inside the mosque the rows of devotees were not standing straight and this defect was being removed. In those

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prone to fall a prey to this form of lie so neither you yourself, nor anyone else in their presence should be allowed to indulge in it.

When two or more children happen to quarrel with each other and someone takes a complaint before the tutor, teacher or the parents, he should be specially on guard for it is the occasion when the child might fall a prey to falsehood. Before taking their statements explain to them the value of speaking the truth and the sin of indulging in falsehood. Let them bear in mind that the Holy Prophet declared 'false evidence' to be the greatest sin.[22]

Never miss to praise before them the noble quality of truthfu'ness. Also mention to them episodes of Muslim history when believers felt no hesitation in sacrificing their lives on the altar of truth.

Let your dealings with the child be honest, and your words true, straightforward and frank. Guard the child, as otherwise he might learn this vice from a neighbour or a friend in school. "As a hen rears its chicks, so should you rear truthfulness".[23]

We should never lose sight of the following valuable saying of the Holy Prophet :

" Speaking the truth leads to the path of righteousness and righteousness leads to Paradise. Man goes on speaking the truth and by speaking the truth he becomes a *Siddeeq* (*i.e.*, truthful, a rank second to none but that of prophethood according to Islam). Falsehood leads to the path of wickedness and wickedness leads to hell. Man goes on indulging in falsehood until by this indulgence he is written as a liar before God."[24]

Cultivate in children the virtue of truthfulness so that God might make your home, your society and your country a paradise for you and ordain that in the life to come your abodes would be in Paradise.

22. *Tirmidhi.*
23. Hazrat Ameer-ul-Momineen, *Alfazl*, dated 15th March, 1939.
24. *Bukhāree*, Kitāb-al-Adab.

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Industry

Islam is probably the only religion which does not possess a priest class. In this respect it goes to such an extent that it declares undesirable to have a paid Imām (*i.e.*, one who leads the congregation in the mosque). Every one should earn his own livelihood, none should sit idle. The Holy Quran says :

"No bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another : And man shall have nothing but what he strives for."[25]

Islam teaches the lesson that every individual shall have to bear his own responsibilities; no one could take off this burden by way of atonement, or in any other way. Sense of responsibility breeds sense of industry and the habit of industry can never be formed in a person who lacks sense of responsibility. Childhood is the most proper stage in which one can be made industrious, but it is sad to note that due attention is not paid to this aspect of education.

Children contract such silly notions as to regard certain jobs as mean jobs and those engaged in them as not worthy of any respect. They also form a general aversion to manual labour and labourers. These ideas do not allow the idea of the dignity of labour to be born in them. Teach every Ahmadi child the lesson which Hazrat Ameer-ul-Momineen is giving year in and year out. He says :

"He who works, deserves respect and he who does not work but remains idle is a curse and a cause of shame for his family and community."[26]

In order to save children from becoming indolent parents or tutors should make a twenty-four hours programme for them, according to which they should be kept occupied every moment. Indolence breeds mischief.

25. *The Holy Quran*, ch. LIII : vv. 38, 39.
26. *Alfazl*, dated April 10, 1938.

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Hazrat Ameer-ul-Momineen says :

"The child should always be kept occupied in some work or other. I consider play to be a kind of work ; it is not indolence. Indolence according to me is sitting idle without doing any work, or to roam about in streets arm in arm. Take every care that children should either study or play or eat or sleep."[27]

If you leave some fortune for your child, of course you make good provision for him ; but if you give him the habit of industry you provide him far better because it is an imperishable fortune. It is gold that would never rust, it is a garden that knows no autumn. Teach the young lad not to depend on your wealth and prosperity, if fortunately you are well off, nor be cowed down by your poverty if unluckily you are in straitened circumstances. Let him strive on and on because industry is life and life is industry, and " a useless life ", as Goethe puts it, " is but an early death."

The above three, punctuality in prayers, truthfulness and industry, are the basic virtues which the Hazrat has advised us to cultivate among children, but by this the importance of other virtues may not be misunderstood. These as well as all other good morals and habits are, so to say, bricks of the noble edifice of an Ahmadi's character. If he is deficient in any respect, it means a defect in the structure which would spoil the whole beauty of character.

Below I give a brief survey of some other good morals with practical hints for their cultivation among children.

Modesty

Modesty is a quality which every man possesses by nature from childhood. If nourished properly it continues and increases, otherwise it might be lost. So parents should have regard to this virtue in upbringing the children. They should not let their sex inclinations come to the surface when their children are with them because it creates shamelessness. The mother should

27. *Alfazl*, March 11, 1939.

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also not be scolded in the child's presence. The infant should not be allowed to remain naked; and when he grows up, if he bathes in the open he should keep his private parts covered. The child should not be taken to the cinema or allowed to read obscene novels. As stated in the preceding pages he should be punished or admonished only when it is inevitable and that too not in public. Mention of his faults should not be made to him again and again, nor to others. When he becomes ten years of age he should necessarily be made to sleep in a separate bed. All these precautions would save and nourish modesty which is such a great virtue that the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) is reported to have said, "Modesty is a part of Faith."[28] It is stated of the Holy Prophet himself that he was more modest than a virgin who remains behind the doors.[29] When he was a child the building of the Ka'aba was under construction. His uncle Hazrat Abbas told him to take off his waist-garment and place it on his shoulder to avoid being scratched by the stones he was fetching. The Holy Prophet did so accordingly but due to modesty he fell senseless. When he came to his senses the words that he uttered were, "my waist-garment." Hazrat Abbas hastily tied it up.[30] What an excellent example of modesty our Holy Prophet's childhood has provided us with!

A note of warning may be sounded. That modesty which takes the form of shyness in teaching, learning, preaching and advising is not at all praiseworthy. Allah is not ashamed of stating the truth and so no believer should be ashamed of doing so when necessary. Companions of the Holy Prophet were safe from this wrong sense of modesty. That is why we have received guidance from them in every respect of life *e.g.*, sexual relations. Children should be made modest but care should be taken lest wrong guidance should breed unnecessary shyness, or complex hypocrisy in them.

28 *Bukhāree*, Kitāb-ul-Adab.
39. *Bukhāree*, Kitāb-ul-Adab.
30. *Bukhāree*, Kitāb-ul-Hajj.

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Generosity and Self-sacrifice

Generosity means parting with one's right for another's sake. Self-sacrifice is the last stage of generosity. It means preference of others' needs over the needs of oneself, to suffer trouble to give others' comfort, to starve oneself to provide food for others.

Islam in order to create these virtues in us teaches us firstly that God is the maintainer of all living beings and He has taken upon Himself their protection. Secondly that we save only what we spend for His sake. Thirdly that we shall be rewarded manyfold. These maxims should in simple language and in a simple manner be repeated very often to the child as he gains sufficient commonsense to understand them. The practical way of cultivating these virtues is: give the child some sweetmeat and tell him to distribute it to other children. Give him some pocket-money and advise him to contribute to some charity fund. Demand petty sacrifices from him, *e.g.*, 'leave your chair for your sister.'

These small devices coupled with wise suggestions would, God willing, make the child a generous and self-sacrificing youth.

Courage and Bravery

Of all the religions it is Islam that has given such teachings and placed such examples before its followers as to create and nourish in them the qualities of courage and bravery.

Islam cultivates these virtues by teaching Muslims firstly that the time of death is fixed and none can escape when God decrees death. Secondly that success is dependent not on numbers; that the smallness of numbers is immaterial provided the Muslims strive for a right cause and strive in the right manner, remaining true and firm. Thirdly that a life sacrificed in God's path is best spent and carries a promise of paradise in the life to come. Let Ahmadis be taught these lessons from childhood. Citing of examples of courage and bravery of the Holy Prophet and companions,

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especially of those who were of tender age, would develop courage and bravery in them.

Never frighten the child. Don't allow him to see a book which might have a bad effect on his mind, *e.g.*, third class detective novels. Unfamiliar surroundings have a sort of awesome effect on the child; to remove this take him to strange places and let him see new faces. Give the child proper diet. Excessive use of vegetables makes coward, while a proper quantity of meat endows courage.

Physical weakness breeds cowardice. Take care of the child's health. From very infancy massage and suitable exercise should be given to the child. The child should necessarily be medically examined once at least without any apparent need so that congenital defects in the body if any be discovered and attended to. According to the temperament and physique of the child select some suitable country game for him and habituate him to a bit of regular P. T. Boxing, riding, shooting, wrestling, Kabaddi and flag-fight are very useful for the cultivation of these virtues. Hockey, tennis, cricket etc., such foreign costly games should not be indulged in because they cause a division between rich and poor and this spoils a child's character.

Simplicity and Cleanliness

The child should be taught to remain simple in diet, in clothes, in manners and in thoughts. By emphasis on simplicity some people are apt to ignore cleanliness. It is a great mistake. Our Holy Prophet and his successors wore the most simple clothes but they were lovers of cleanliness. Allah has ordered the believers:

"And your garments do purify; And uncleanliness do shun."[31]

This command should be never lost sight of. Simplicity means that one should not be a fop or a dandy; costly clothes may be worn or rich food may

31. The Quran, ch. LXXIV: vv. 4, 5.

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be taken but one should not be particular about it. Hazrat Ameer-ul-Momineen's one main purpose of Tahrik-i-Jadid is to make the Jama'at simple.

In order to create these virtues in the child, the father, teacher and tutor should all set their own example before him to copy. The child should not be allowed to copy foreign fashions. Smoking has also unfortunately become a fashion of the age. Take care that he is not caught in this harmful and evil habit. The child should be habituated to brushing teeth, using water after easing himself, taking bath especially without fail.

Self-respect and Self-confidence

Let every child as early as possible learn and understand, at least be aware, of the sense of the following :

وللّٰه العزة ولرسوله وللمومنين

i.e., " To Allah belongs all honour, and to His Apostle and to the believers." [32]

This verse gives to a Muslim such dignity that he cannot forget self-respect. Self-respect brings self-confidence in its trail. But despite this God's decree ordinary Muslims are generally suffering from an inferiority complex. Movements like Pakistan are ample proof of it. A Muslim seems afraid that he would be devoured up by the majority community and has no confidence that he would be able to rout his enemies. Ahmadiyyat, which is nothing but true Islam, has delivered its followers from this inferiority complex ; rather the chest of every Ahmadi is swelling with the feeling that he is the only rightly guided person and that the reins of all the kingdoms of the earth are to be handed over to him. Narrate prophecies about the bright future of Ahmadiyyat to the child very often so that he may, as soon as he gains consciousness, form the idea that he, if he remains on the right path, is destined to be the future ruler of the world.

Your treatment of the child should not be shocking to his sense of self-respect and self-confidence.

32, The Quran, ch. LXIII : v. 8.

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Honour him and never dishonour his mother before him. Never punish or reprimand him publicly. Entrust to him some task of responsibility, *e.g.*, buying your requirements from the bazar. Ask him to read a passage from a book on the public stage or recite a poem. His neat and clean dress, his dignified gait and appearance, and his balanced speech, all should be expressive of his self-respect and self-confidence.

Love

The pathway of love is the safest and the shortest. Try to cultivate in the child the love of Allah, His Quran, the Holy Prophet, the Promised Messiah, the Amir-ul-Momineen and other believers and all mankind. Love was the special virtue of the early Muslims and Companions of the Promised Messiah. Traditions tell us that once a Companion after the death of the Holy Prophet (may God bless him) lost his eyesight. His friends went to him and expressed their sympathy at the loss. That Companion replied, "Why be sorry? I don't require these eyes now. The person that I wished to look at with them is no more here. After the Holy Prophet they were useless to me." This shows what a deep love the Companions cherished for the Holy Prophet.

In order to create love of the Holy Quran in children buy them a copy of their own and teach them to preserve it with great care, love and respect, and to strive to learn and act up to it.

For the love of the Holy Prophet and the Promised Messiah occasionally relate to children anecdotes from their history and their Companions' history and teach them to recite Durud.

For the love of the Ameer-ul-Momineen teach the children *Amin* of Mahmud in Durri-Thamin and, tell them how he saved the Jama'at at the Paighamis' secession, and teach them to write letters to the Hazrat beseeching him to pray for them. For the love of other Muslims tell the children to greet every believer that they meet.

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Love of the Holy Quran, the Holy Prophet, the Promised Messiah and the Ameer-ul-Momineen would greatly help to create in the mind of the child love of the Creator of all these. Besides this narrate to him the various attributes of God and His numerous blessings over us.

Honesty and Loyalty

The virtues of honesty and loyalty occupy no less an important place in the list of Islamic morals. The Holy Quran describes successful believers as 'keepers of their trusts and their covenants.' [33]

The Holy Prophet is reported to have said:

"He who is devoid of honesty is devoid of Faith, and one who has no regard for his words is devoid of religion." [34]

Hazrat Ameer-ul-Momineen has in his addresses to the Khuddām laid great emphasis on these virtues. It is the bounden duty of parents and tutors to create these virtues in children. The method is simple. Deal with them and others in their presence honestly and loyally. Relate to them stories from Muslim history concerning these. Provide for them occasions to praise these virtues themselves.

Good Manners

Possession of good manners is such a noble quality that it endears its possessor even to enemies. Islam possess its own elaborate code of manners which is illustrated by the beautiful models of the Holy Prophet and Companions. We don't owe anything to ancient Greece and Rome, nor to the present-day Europe and America: our own Prophet Muhammad (may the blessings and peace of God be upon him) has taught us everything. Now it is our duty to acquaint our progeny with Islamic etiquette from childhood so that when they grow up they are according to the Islamic point of view good-mannered gentlemen. It is difficult for me

33. *The Holy Quran*, ch. XIII: v. 8.
3 *Tibrani Kabir.*

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to compress statement of Islamic etiquette on all the various items in this article and I can refer only to a few and that too with great brevity.

Etiquette of Dining

1. Wash hands before and after taking meals.
2. Start meals with the name of God.
3. Eat only that food for which you possess no dislike.
4. Don't mix different dishes so as to make the taste or look disagreeable to your partner.
5. Eat and drink with the right hand.
6. Service of meals should also be from the right.
7. Start should not be made from the centre of the plate but from one corner that is nearest to the eater.
8. No adverse criticism on the preparation of meals should be made.
9. The whole family, if no guests are present, should dine together.
10. No breathing in a tumbler of water be done.
11. It should be taken slowly in three breaths.
12. Water and meals should not be taken unnecessarily in a standing position, nor in reclining posture.
13. After meals thank God and recite the prayer:

الحمدلله الذى اطعمنا واسقانا وجعلنا من المسلمين

i.e., "All praise is due to Allah who has treated us with food and drink and made us Muslims.

Etiquette of Visiting

1. Meet each other cheerfully.
2. The first words that escape your lips should be السلام عليكم, *i.e.*, "Peace be on you."
3. Shake hands with the acquaintance that you come across.
4. Children should greet the elders, riders should greet those on foot and the visitor should greet those to whom he comes.

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days it was a frequent topic of conversation that the Muslims had come to wreck and ruin, that it was the close of the 13th century of the *Hijrah* when the *Imām Mehdee* was to appear, to be followed by *Hazrat Isā* (Jesus) in his second advent. I remember my mother used to speak of these things with great joy and expectation. She used to say that the time was drawing nigh, and that the solar and lunar eclipse taking place in the month of Ramazān would be a sign of the advent of the expected Teacher.

It is possible that these dreams I saw were the result of the talk I heard around me, but it cannot be denied that visions of this kind were seen in those days by the young and old alike, in places and circumstances flung far apart. As later events have shown, such dreams and visions were the forerunners of the great event about to take place. Through the Promised Messiah, on whom be peace, we have seen the sun of Islam rising, and we have been able to read and understand the Holy Quran. Hazrat Ahmad used to say that, except through him, there could be no revival of Islam, and that no one now could really understand the Holy Quran unless he learnt it from him. This is perfectly true.

In 1903, when our father, Hazrat Dr. Syed Abdul Sattar Shah, sent me and my younger brother, Syed Habibullah Shah, to join the school at Qadian, I remember we started on the journey with great enthusiasm. We were at that time about 13 and 11 years of age respectively. It is not easy for me to describe the joyous eagerness in our young hearts with which we were looking forward to the time when we would have the good fortune to see the Promised Messiah; and unless a man has experienced in his own person a feeling like ours, he cannot form any estimate of it. From the days when we were mere toddlers tumbling about our mother's knee, we had been hearing from her about the advent of this blessed World Teacher and the great good fortune of those who Would recognise him for what he was and tender allegiance. On a Friday she would gather her children around her and

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5. "When you are greeted with Salam, greet with a better Salam than it or return it."[35]

6. Standing as a sign of love and respect is permissible.

7. Children should ask permission of their parents to enter their private apartments, before morning prayer, when clothes are put off at midday and after night prayer.

8. "O you who believe! do not enter houses other than your own houses until you have asked permission and saluted their inmates."[36]

9. The way to ask permission is to say Assalamo alaikum and 'may I come in.'

10. If after third salutation the permission is not obtained or no reply is received, then the visitor should go back.

11. When seeking permission don't stand in front of the door if it does not contain a curtain, but stand on the right or left.

12. No permission is required to enter shops or such other public places.

Etiquette of Speech

1. Talk should be very soft and polite.
2. It should be distinct and clear.
3. It should not be too loud.
4. Avoid silly talk.
5. No discussion should be started with ignorant people; when they address you say, 'Salam'.
6. When mentioning some past acquirements say ماشاءالله and when speaking of some future intention or event say انشاءالله.
7. When the audience consists of more than one person then turn your face to each one of them, don't go on staring at one person.
8. Don't whisper in another person's ear while some other is also present there.

35. *The Holy Quran*, ch. IV : v. 86.
36. *The Holy Quran*, ch. XXIV : v. 27.

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Etiquette of Sleep

1. Children of ten years should sleep in separate beds.
2. Husband and wife should have a separate apartment in the house.
3. No sleep before and no talking after the Isha prayer is desirable except when necessary.
4. Sleep on belly is bad.
5. Sleep should be started lying on the right side.
6. When returning to bed say:

اللهم باسمك اموت واحيى

i.e., O my Allah! with Thy name do I die and rise up.

7. After getting up the following prayer should be recited:

الحمدلله الذى احيانا بعد ما اماتنا وعليه النشور

i.e., "All praise is due to Allah who gives us life after our death and to Him are we to return."

The upbringing and education of children is a sweet labour for the fruits of which one has not to wait long. It is one of the noblest tasks as I have shown by quotations from the Holy Quran, the Holy Prophet, the Promised Messiah and the Amir-ul-Momineen. Islam possesses such a moral code as gives full guidance in the matter of education and upbringing of the children. This is the path by treading which you can rightly hope to make your children, by God's grace, punctual in prayers, truthful, industrious, honest, loyal, brave, courageous, simple, clean, self-respecting, self-confident, and self-sacrificing, good-natured, good-mannered, persevering, and loving healthy youths—the pride of your family, community and country.

الحمدلله رب العالمين

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POLYGAMY AND ISLAM

[By Zahur-ud-Din Butt, B.Sc., LL.B.]

Polygamy is one of those subjects which have been ruthlessly criticised by the Western writers on Islam. It has often been alleged that polygamy is an obligatory institution in Islam. This is of course not true. At the advent of our Holy Prophet Muhammad, on whom be peace, polygamy was common among various races. Among all eastern nations of antiquity it was a recognised institution : among the Hindus it prevailed from the earliest times, among the ancient Medes, Babylonians, Assyrians and Persians there were no restrictions to the number of wives a man might have. Polygamy existed among the Israelites before the advent of Moses, on whom be peace, who continued the institution without imposing any limit on the number of marriages which a Hebrew husband might contract. In later times the Talmud restricted the number by the ability of the husband to maintain the wives properly. The German reformers, as Hallam points out, even so late as the sixteenth century admitted the validity of a second and third marriage contemporaneously with the first in default of issue and other similar causes. Thus polygamy was practised from the earliest times and is not, as pointed out by over-zealous Christian missionaries, a 'Mohammadan institution'. The Bible is clearly in favour of polygamy. McCab says, " And so curious was the influence of the Old Testament that several of the fathers could not bring themselves to condemn it (polygamy) and it was not officially suppressed by the Church till 1060 A.D. Luther and the Reformers allowed it even later." Read the Vedas, the Bible, the Zendavesta and the writings of Confucius, and Buddha and you will not find in them any injunction disallowing polygamy. Lord Krishna, Solomon and David were polygamists to

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a startling extent. The Holy Quran placed restrictions on the existing polygamy by limiting the number of wives. It seems to be always forgotten or ignored that Islam does not compel a Muslim to marry more wives than one. It only allows polygamy under certain conditions. The Holy Prophet restricted the number of wives and framed laws for the proper working of this institution. The question arises, why was polygamy not abolished by the Prophet of Islam? The answer is not far to seek. Polygamy has always been, is, and shall be a useful institution to human society. It is an exceptional and remedial measure to meet certain contingencies of time. Nature does not seem to be in favour of absolute monogamy. Men are naturally exposed to danger and death, especially in times of war. Consequently there is often huge disparity between male and female populations. How should we manage the surplus number of women? Every woman has the right to get a husband; should they be doomed to perpetual misery and helplessness? There is a huge disparity between the male and the female populations in many countries, the only solution of which lies in polygamy. The whole of Christendom is suffering under various disabilities owing to a rigid observance of monogamy. The increasing volume of bastardy in Europe proves the increase in the number of disallowed connections between men and women and one who indulges in such relations is not necessarily sworn to one woman which means polygamy in its abstractive sense. Bastardy is extinct in Muslim countries. Polygamy is also a great check on prostitution. The maintaining of mistresses has never been the curse of Muslim lands.

Man wishes to see himself in the person of his children. It is a natural desire, and preserves the human race. A man's first wife may be barren. Polygamy then is the only remedy. Besides, polygamy is the only practical method to prevent the evils of prostitution, the unmerited shame of the "unmarried mother" and the cruel bastardising of the child. It is also the only sane remedy of a falling birth rate. 'Old Maids'

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cannot make contributions to the populations of a country.

Christianity and Islam have been forced to meet the natural conditions. Islam met those conditions by recognising them and by framing laws that legitimised the mother and the offspring, safeguarding their honour, preserving them from shame and degradation, providing for and securing by law their social status and economic position. Christianity attempted to meet those conditions by no honourable means. Islam recognises that monogamy may be the general and primary rule of life, but the additional women too have their rights and in so doing it has provided for the honour and the social preservation of the mother and the offspring.

The Holy Quran would not have been the complete code of life that it is, had it not made provision against the circumstances which call for another matrimony, nor would the Holy Prophet of Islam have been the complete model had he not left us an example in his own person in this respect as well.

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ALL PROPHETS' DAY

By Abdul Hafiz, B.A.

[*Read in the last All Prophets' Day Meeting in Calcutta.—Ed.*]

Its Object and Significance

An "All Prophets' Day" is celebrated once a year under the auspices of the Ahmadiyya Movement all over the world, wherever the Movement has its adherents. The object of this celebration is two-fold; firstly, to create and foster a spirit of universal reverence towards all religious teachers of the world and a scientific outlook in the study of their life and teachings; secondly, to bring about religious peace and unity among the nations. The observance of a day every year in honour of all religious teachers was enjoined on the Ahmadiyya Community by its present leader, Ameerul-Momeneen and Khalifatul-Masih II, Hazrat Mirza Basheeruddin Mahmud Ahmad, may God help him in all his noble efforts, in 1939; and the community is thankful to God that it has been able to hold this function every year since then. Up to this year, the programme for this occasion has been the organisation of public meetings to offer a common platform for all religious communities to speak on the life and teachings of their respective prophets or great religious founders. The community is grateful for the assistance and co-operation it has received in this connection from the various communities.

Prophets are the real builders of society, harmonisers of progress, and torch-bearers of civilisation. Without them, men are only so many dangerously powerful beasts, full of lust and full of greed, knowing no satisfaction till they reach the grave. Prophets convert beastly men into civilised beings and civilised men into spiritual men, devoted to the service of God and His creatures. They are men like us, but detached

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from the ordinary cravings of man. Worldly position or wealth or power has no attraction for them. Their thoughts are God-centred ; and their chief pre-occupation is to seek the pleasure of God. They are pleased with God, and God is pleased with them. God chooses them as His own, speaks to them, answers their prayers, reveals to them in words full of wisdom His secret will about the future course of civilisation and progress, and finally, commissions them to deliver His message to men. Under God's command, they invite men to paths of virtue, piety and peace. Their call is unfailing, because God is always at their back to assist them against all oppositions. They manifest in themselves Godly attributes—His majesty and power, His omniscience, His justice, His mercy, and kindness, His patience and forgiveness, and so on. But they are men and not God. Their connection with God is comparable to that of red-hot iron with fire. Red-hot iron is iron, and not fire, although it burns. Similarly, prophets are men merged in God, and not God, although they manifest in themselves Godly attributes. The relationship of the prophets with God has been variously expressed in the scriptures of the world, often in metaphors like Incarnation of God or Son of God or simply God, but when read with reference to their context, these metaphors cannot mislead one to think that prophets are God or part of God and not men.

At different times in different countries, God has raised many prophets ; and there are reasons to believe that no nation has been left without a prophet. The Holy Quran says, " Assuredly We sent amongst every people a prophet (XVI : 36); there has been no people unvisited by a warner (XXXV : 24); and We did send prophets before thee (*i.e.*, the Holy Prophet Muhammad —peace be on him), of them are some whose stories we have related to thee ; and of them are some whose stories we have not related to thee (XL : 78)." History does not tell us how many prophets have so far appeared in the world. The general belief among the Muslims is that their number is not less than 1,24,000.

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The Holy Quran enjoins equal belief in all prophets, ancient or modern, of one country or another. In Chapter III, verse 84 of the Book, we read—"Say, we believe in God in what has been revealed to us, and to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribes; and in what was given to Moses, Jesus, and the prophets from their Lord: we make no distinction between one and another among them : and we submit to God." The last part of the verse is specially noteworthy here. It is clear from here that to make no distinction between one prophet and another is a condition precedent to one's fitness for submission to God, which is the soul of religion.

The Holy Quran has mentioned only as many Prophets and as many incidents of their life as furnish typical examples of the message it has got to deliver to the world, or call for the removal of prevailing misconceptions. The purpose of the Holy Book is not to present to the world a connected history of the prophets; and it follows from this that a Muslim cannot reject any great religious founder simply because his name has not been mentioned in the Holy Quran, or in the authentic sayings of the Holy Prephet, specially in view of the fact that the Holy Book itself says that the stories of some prophets were not related to the Holy Prophet Muhammad,—peace and the blessings of God be upon him.

Following the general principles enunciated in the Holy Quran and on the authority of his personal revelations, Hazrat Ahmed of Qadian,—peace be on him—the Promised Messiah and Mahdi and Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, has told us that Sri Krishna, Sri Ramchandra and Buddha of India, Zoroaster of Persia, and Confucius of China were prophets of God, Peace and blessings be on them all. If any person feels any doubt about the divine mission of these and other ancient religious teachers on the score of one or other of their teachings or life incidents as now presented before us, he should make sure that these so-called teachings and incidents are not later interpolations or distortions of the real facts. Historians tell us, and

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the Holy Quran warns, that there have been interpolations and distortions in the old scriptures of the world. We should also bear in mind that no false person can, for ages, occupy a throne of love and homage in the hearts of millions and millions of people.

Prophets shine in the glory of God. A prophet is a prophet because God appoints him to this office, and under His express command he declares himself to be a prophet; and not because a particular group of people chooses to call him so. Man cannot determine the spiritual eminence one has attained in the eye of God. So the epithet of prophet must be conferred by God, and not by man. Prophets are the Sun of the spiritual firmament, and we must not confuse them with saints and other holy men who occupy the place of moon and stars. The Scriptures give us definite criteria to distinguish a prophet from a saint or a holy man. There are saints and holy men in every age, but prophets appear only at times of major crises: when leadership is selfish and unscrupulous, and corruption is rampant in every walk of life; when self-aggrandisement at the cost of others is too common, and honest and selfless men find themselves overpowered and helpless; and, when religion and God recede from the actual life of man, and a few formulas and rituals take their place simply to act as a drag. Prophets are not isolated personages, but belong to a vast brotherhood, each of whom testifies to the truth of his predecessors and foretells the advent of a successor. These prophecies are immensely helpful for the purpose of recognition of prophets. Prophets have to enforce laws and rules of conduct disliked and opposed by their contemporaries, but they never vacillate or make compromise with untruth. They go forward with their mission under all circumstances and never doubt their success. No prophet has ever left this world without leaving behind him a band of devoted followers who work out his programme and eventually supplant the corrupt order by a high and noble one. Truly Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth, has said, "A tree is known by its fruits."

Let us accept all prophets and honour all religious teachers. Prophets were all from God, and God's

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message they delivered, of course with colourings suited to those addressed. Underneath these colourings, which it is not very difficult to see through, lies hidden a common element of permanent value. It is for us to discover this hidden element and thus lay the foundation of inter-religious peace and unity. We must take heed that we live in an extraordinary age. Nations have risen against nations, classes against classes, dashing against one another like surging waves of the stormy sea ; and all indications are that the existing order of things is going to give place to new. On every side we hear the cry for a New Order. Who knows what shape the coming New Order will take? But one thing is certain. The New Order must be universal in its application, and there will be no room for exclusiveness. We must, therefore, give up the isolationist outlook, if already we have not done so, and accept all prophets of God. Let us take this message from this " All Prophets' Day " meeting and then bid good-bye.

And our last words are : all praise is due to God, the creator, developer and sustainer of the Universe.

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recite to us *Surah Kahf* from the Holy Quran, and she would tell us that she did so because all those who recited this *Surah* were promised immunity from the harmful influence of the *Dajjāl*.

Thus when we were told that we were to go to school at Qadian our young imagination was stirred to the utmost. Coming by the *kachcha* road from Batala, when we reached Qadian and first saw the colony of sweepers[1], which the road skirted, we received a great shock, for it was shockingly dirty, as such colonies always are all over India. Qadian proper itself, too, we found to be a cheerless sort of small village without any interesting features for us. The school we had come to join gave us the first impression that it was not much better. The bare mud walls and the small rooms looked very unimpressive as compared with the nice brick-built, imposing building of the Christian Mission School at Narowal where we had been students till then. Narowal, too, was a larger town than Qadian; it was more populous and seemed more interesting. Coming to Qadian with a picture of the place in our mental vision which was drawn by our childish fancies, when we saw that the reality was nothing like the picture which our imagination had drawn of it, we felt desolate and sad and lonely. When we found that we had to attend the five daily prayers in the mosque we found it awkward and very troublesome, especially attendance in the mosque for the Isha and morning prayers. One day I got so fed up with it that when the room monitor woke me up, I hit him on the face. We had fallen into a very awkward situation.

But within less than half a year of this life the spirit of the teachings of the Promised Messiah worked a magic change in us. Over and above the attendance at the mosque for the five obligatory daily prayers, we developed a taste for Tahajjud and became regular in it, sometimes standing in prayer for hours in the silence and secrecy of the later watches of night. Our

1. These people, the untouchables of Hindu Society, have, mostly in Qadian, joined Islam and that quarter of the town where they live is far more clean now.

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TO GOD

[Re-expressed from the *Durr-i-Thameen Farasee.*

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O Lord, my God!

My kind Benefactor and Friend!

When didst Thou ever set limits

To Thy compassion and mercy,

And Thy favours upon me,

That I should now proceed

To set a limit

To the depth of my ardour

And devotion.

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teachers and tutors of those days would be able to bear testimony to the truth of what I have said. I remember that the desire in our hearts in connection with the Tahajjud prayer used to be that no one should see us offering it. With this in view I sometimes used to go out into the fields or bolt my door from the inside before standing up for prayer.

The Promised Messiah, peace and the blessings of God be upon him, offered his prayers in the Masjid Mubārak. After prayers he would usually remain sitting in the mosque among his disciples, talking to them, educating them and instructing them with his discourses. Breaking the regulations of the Boarding House, we were fond of going to the Masjid Mubārak for prayers instead of the Masjid-i-Aqsā with the other boys; and I delighted in listening to the Promised Messiah and eagerly looked forward to it every day.

The Promised Messiah, peace be upon him, often used to go out walking for exercise, sometimes in one direction and sometimes in another. On these occasions he was always attended by varying numbers of disciples who happened to be at Qadian. On many occasions, we, the boys of the boarding house, when we saw the Promised Messiah going out, we would forget everything and follow him. In our eagerness to keep the Promised Messiah in view and in order to miss no word from his lips if we could help it, we used to flit in and out and right and left of the crowd around him.

One day the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, went for a walk in the direction of what is now known as Darul-Anwār and was then an expanse of open fields. I too quietly followed in the crowd. Where the house of Maulvi Abdul Mughni Khan is now situated there stood in those days a large banyan tree by the side of the big pond that surrounded Qadian on three sides. Passing by this spot the Promised Messiah had reached the point where now stands the house of Naik Mohammad Khan, when Hakeem Abdul Aziz of Pasrur asked the following question : " In regard to Adam it is stated in the Holy Quran :

عصیٰ آدم ربہ فغویٰ

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These words seem to describe a state of mind which it is not easy to attribute to a Prophet of God."

I still remember a portion of what the Promised Messiah said in answer. He explained how in the Arabic language the sense of the root is carried into the derivatives. The word عصفور which means a sparrow was derived from عصیٰ and فر. *Asa* means "went out of control" and the other part means "Ran away". The sparrow was called عصفور in Arabic because if you hold it in our hand, at the slightest chance it springs out of your grasp and flies away. Unfortunately at this point I was pushed to a position in the crowd that was out of ear shot and could hear no more.

My father was a medical man in government service. Every three years he would obtain three months' leave and come and stay at Qadian in order to benefit from and imbibe the teachings of the Promised Messiah. The Promised Messiah very kindly used to accommodate him in a part of his own house, and thus we had the great good fortune of being under the same roof with the Promised Messiah. I have a clear memory of one of the occasions. It was the hot part of the year. We heard that the Promised Messiah was unwell and was lying in bed in a state of swoon, and that his pulse had become feeble. Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Din and the other medical men among the Ahmadis were in attendance on him. On hearing this I went over to that part of the house where the Promised Messiah lay ill. I saw that he was in bed, with a quilt over him, and Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Din was present by the side of the bed. Two or three other men too were also there, but I have forgotten their names. They were massaging the feet and legs of the Promised Messiah. The Promised Messiah recovered after a short time and said that he had received a revelation from God, and he recited it to those who were present. I have not been able to retain the exact words of this revelation in my memory but I remember very well that its purport was that a violent outbreak of cholera was about to take

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place. Hardly a week after this cholera spread in Qadian. This was in July, 1904. When first I heard about this outbreak having taking place it was in connection with an incident that took place in the house of Mirza Sultan Ahmad. About ten o'clock in the morning I heard sounds of grief and loud weeping coming from this house. I came out of my room, and hardly had I done so when the Promised Messiah too emerged from his room into the courtyard. He enquired from someone the cause of this weeping, and was informed that Mirza Ali Sher Beg had died of cholera. This Ali Sher Beg was an old man with a white beard. He was a relative of the Promised Messiah.

When in 1903 I and my younger brother Habib-Ullah Shah joined the school at Qadian, one day we went for recreation to the garden about which we had heard from the other students. We had hardly entered it when a man came running towards us, shouting abuse. He was an old man with a white venerable, beard and a string of beeds was in his hand which we could see him counting even as he was shouting abuse at us. It struck me as very odd that a man of his appearance, even while he was engaged in devotional recitations, should see no harm in using filthy and obscene language. We turned our footsteps in the direction of the boarding house but the man followed us. On my asking I was told that the name of this man was Ali Sher. He was a relative of the Promised Messiah, but a violent and a bitter opponent.

During the time of tribulations, such as the outbreak of plague or any violent wide-spread disease, or destruction owing to an earthquake, the Promised Messiah repeatedly impressed upon his followers that they should have recourse to real heartfelt repentance and resolve to live a better and purer life in future. Under the influence of this teaching I remember we used to go out into the fields to pray. Often we were turned out of these fields by farmers to whom they belonged, and this was a sign of the state of helplessness in which the Ahmadis found themselves in Qadian at that time.

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One incident I remember very well in this connection. In order to provide more accommodation for students it was decided to construct another room. Bricks began to arrive one day at the site which adjoined our class-room where we were busy with our lessons. The labourer had barely started to unload the donkeys which carried these bricks when Mirza Nizam-ud-Din arrived there. He was a ring leader among the opponents of the Promised Messiah. When he saw what was being done he flew into a rage and hit the labourer on the head with his shoe and ordered him off the premises—a thing which he had no right to do because the Promised Messiah was the lawful owner of the piece of land in question. But so helpless were the Ahmadis of that time that we could not stop this high-handedness at the moment. In the darkness of the night, however, the construction of the room was completed and the opponents did not dare to demolish it. To get the work done quickly we young students of the school too helped in the work, and we were joined by the members of the staff as well. We worked all through the night. (*To be continued*)

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THE UPBRINGING OF AHMADI CHILDREN

(By Ch. Mushtaq Ahmad Bajwa, B.A., LL.B.)

Our Ideal

The object of the advent of the Promised Messiah (may the blessing and peace of God be upon him) was not only to bring about a change in our beliefs but he came to effect a complete transformation in our lives. His mission is summed up in the following revelation :

يحيى الدين و يقيم الشريعة .

i.e., the Promised Messiah was to restore to life and revive Islam, which had started decaying, and to establish the Shariat. He was to bring back to us the golden era of the Companions. Our ideal, therefore, is to annihilate the so-called magnificent structure of western civilization and build anew our own grand edifice of Islamic culture. Another *ilhām* puts this ideal in a beautiful phrase : " New organisation, new earth and new heaven ".

Importance of Children's Education

To achieve that end we should build our character and reform our conduct in such a manner as would make us resemble the Companions in all respects. Character and conduct depend mostly upon habits which are formed during childhood. So in order to bring about renaissance in the Islamic world and to pass safely our heritage from the Promised Messiah to the coming generations, we should look to our children—the architects of our community's destinies. Unlike Hinduism, Islam does not make the salvation of a person dependent upon his male offspring who could offer *pinda* (cake) after his death, but no doubt it blesses those who yearn for children that are God-fearing. By teaching us various prayers in the Holy Quran, God has given us

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